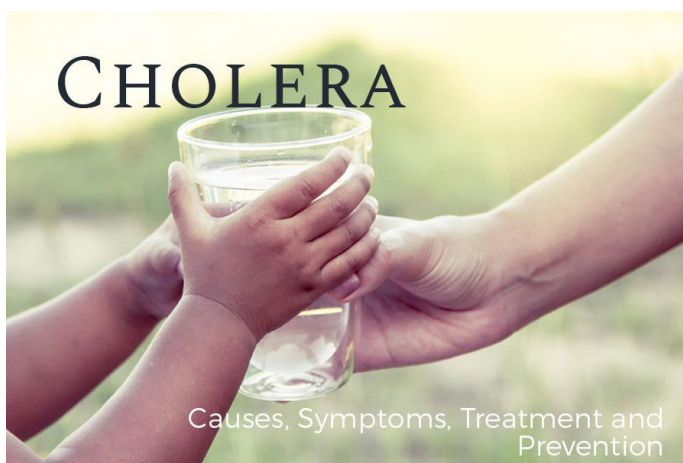


## Cholera: Causes, Symptoms, Treatment and Prevention

Although cholera is not a very common risk for travellers, it is still a good idea to take preventative actions, especially if you are traveling to a high-risk area. Travel doctors recommend the oral cholera vaccine, which provides a strong defence against cholera. Most people tolerate the oral vaccine well.

If you are travelling to an area where you may be exposed to questionable water supply and poor hygiene conditions, we highly recommend the oral cholera vaccine, which dissolves in water.



### Causes, Symptoms and Treatment of Cholera

The vibrio cholerae bacterium causes cholera, which is an acute infectious disease of the intestinal tract. The bacterium is present in food or water that has been contaminated by faeces, and the condition causes diarrhoea.

Vibrio cholerae multiplies quickly once it has been ingested, and produces a toxin in the intestine. Large amounts of minerals and water are secreted into the bowels, leading to watery diarrhoea.

The onset of cholera can take anywhere from two hours to five days, and approximately 75% of people never develop symptoms. Only ten percent of people develop severe cases of cholera, which could lead to death in people with compromised immune systems.

In addition to watery diarrhoea, vomiting can also occur, making rehydration difficult. Dehydration is a serious risk of cholera, which might cause the following symptoms:

- dry mouth
- little to no urine
- dry tear ducts
- sunken eyes
- intense thirst
- muscle cramps
- rapid heartbeat

Dehydration may lead to fatigue and loss of consciousness.

**Preventative measures that may help prevent cholera include:**

- using only treated water to wash your hands, brush your teeth and drink.
- washing all fruit and vegetables with treated water.
- avoiding cutting cooked and raw food on the same cutting board or storing it in the same container.
- avoiding fish, vegetables, ice and ice-cream in questionable conditions.

You can go a long way to preventing cholera by following general hygiene and food safety guidelines and speaking to your travel doctor about the oral cholera vaccine.